

In this way, the bill strikes a careful balance between the public's right to know and the needs of law enforcement, national security, and the fair administration of justice.

The protections of this bill have never been more crucial to a free press and an informed public. In recent years, the press has been under assault, as reporters are increasingly being subpoenaed—and in some cases imprisoned—for refusing to open their notebooks and disclose their confidential sources.

Right now, for example, a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter for the Detroit Free Press named David Ashenfelter faces possible contempt charges for refusing to disclose sources who exposed serious prosecutorial misconduct. In the last Congress, Pulitzer Prize-winner Bill Safire and others testified on the importance of this bill. President Bush's Solicitor General Ted Olson also strongly supports press shield legislation.

H.R. 985 has been carefully tailored through the legislative process and represents a well-considered, bipartisan, consensus approach. The bill was significantly revised and amended during the proceedings of the last Congress to address concerns of Members and the Executive Branch that it strike a more sensitive balance in the areas of terrorism, national security, and other critical areas. These changes and revisions markedly strengthened the bill, and it passed the House by an overwhelming bipartisan vote of 398 to 21.

This legislation has the strong support of members on both sides of the aisle. It is also supported by more than 100 editorial boards, and a diverse group of over 50 media companies and organizations, including the Newspaper Association of America, the Associated Press, the National Association of Broadcasters, News Corp., as well as CNN and all the broadcast networks. This broad and bipartisan support only underscores the importance of this measure.

Even a bill with such strong support is still open to improvement, however, and I would like to identify one aspect of the revisions introduced during the last Congress that may have some unwelcome and unintended consequences. At that time, we appropriately revised the definition of a "covered person" to include the requirement that the person be "regularly" engaged in journalism. That limitation ensures that a person cannot claim the protections of the Act by simply putting up a Web site and claiming to be a reporter after receiving a Federal subpoena.

At the same time, however, we also added a requirement that, to be covered by the Act, a person must earn a "substantial portion of the person's livelihood" or "substantial financial gain" from reporting activities. I appreciate the effort to strike a careful balance reflected in this change, but I have some concern that, as media evolves and online reporting and citizen journalism become more and more prominent, this definition may deny credible, responsible reporters and commentators the protection of the Act, which I do not believe is Congress's intent.

Furthermore, in an era of mass layoffs in the news business, some displaced journalists may elect to continue their reporting on a part-time or freelance basis, or may simply carry on their work in the public interest on their own time even if they obtain other employ-

ment outside the professional press. To my mind, such persons should retain the protection of the Act, but the language may be ambiguous in this type of situation.

Finally, while I appreciate that the current definition of "covered person" will cover many responsible, established bloggers, more and more good and significant reporting is being done by small, local blogs or by true volunteers who engage in journalism on their own time, but do so with credibility, professionalism, and integrity. Not all bloggers meet these standards, of course, but many do, and I would hope they will be entitled to the protections of the Act in its final form. Indeed, given the sensationalistic quality of a good deal of modern professional "journalism," it strikes me as somewhat arbitrary to exclude serious political reporters and commentators from coverage simply because of the technology they use or the price they charge.

I note that the Senate version of this legislation uses a more functional test to define a "covered person," focusing on the nature and regularity of the person's activities rather than the financial compensation that they earn. Such an approach appears to strike a thoughtful balance between covering people who have earned the right to be considered journalists, but denying coverage in situations where it is more likely to be inappropriate or exploited. I am hopeful that as this bill continues through the legislative process, we will look closely at the Senate language and consider adopting it into the final law.

I would like to commend my Judiciary Committee colleague RICK BOUCHER of Virginia, the lead sponsor of this bill, for his tireless work on this issue.

I would also like to recognize MIKE PENCE of Indiana and BOB GOODLATTE of Virginia for their efforts in strengthening the bill and ensuring that we could bring a truly bipartisan measure to the House.

### FAMILY SMOKING PREVENTION AND TOBACCO CONTROL ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 1, 2009*

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1256, the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act. This bipartisan legislation would grant the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) long-needed authority to regulate the manufacture, sale, distribution and marketing of tobacco products.

As we all know, tobacco related diseases contribute to the death of 400,000 Americans and costs the nation's health care system nearly \$100 billion each year. The most tragic part of this statistic is that virtually all of these deaths are preventable. It is alarming that preventable diseases such as emphysema, heart disease and cancer all can be attributed to the use of tobacco. We must do everything we can to end preventable suffering and death due to tobacco use. And as we look towards significant, comprehensive health reform legislation, this bill is critically important to achieving our goal of a healthier nation.

The FDA has the scientific expertise and regulatory experience to understand complex tobacco products, stipulate changes and address how these changes interact with the marketing that impacts consumer behavior. The FDA is the best agency to regulate tobacco products because it is regularly engaged in evaluating the scientific and technical evidence related to the safety or lack thereof of consumer products, as well as examining issues related to access, marketing and claims made about these products.

Continuing to allow tobacco manufacturers to escape any sort of regulation when food, drug, device and other manufacturers are subject to oversight is unacceptable. Congress cannot leave tobacco products, the number one preventable cause of death, unregulated. Tobacco companies should not remain free to manipulate their products by secretly increasing nicotine levels or adding candy flavorings to entice children. We need to do what we can to reduce the harm of tobacco products and FDA is the only agency with the level of expertise required to take on this task.

Colleagues, we can all agree that the FDA faces significant challenges, is in desperate need of new, effective leadership and a commitment from this Congress to implement the necessary changes. H.R. 1256 is not in conflict with those changes. The legislation creates a new, separate center for tobacco product regulation within FDA and establishes user fees—paid for by the manufacturers and importers of the tobacco products regulated by FDA—to fully fund the agency's new work relating to tobacco products. None of the positions or funding for the new Center for Tobacco Regulation will be taken from existing FDA resources. I am pleased that the bill before us includes language that maintains the same role of the Appropriations Committee with regard to the fees in this bill that the Committee has with regard to other FDA user fees. Providing the FDA with authority over tobacco products is completely consistent with FDA's core mission to protect the public health.

This bill has strong bipartisan support, and is endorsed by key groups including the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, the American Heart Association, the American Lung Association, the American Medical Association and Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids and more than 1000 other health, medical, consumer, community and faith groups.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. BILL POSEY**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 2, 2009*

Mr. POSEY. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 154, I would ask that the RECORD reflect that I am in favor of H. Res. 273, Recognizing the 188th anniversary of the Independence of Greece and Celebrating Greek and American Democracy. I was present and voted in favor of the resolution, but my vote was not recorded by the electronic device. I would have voted "aye."